

## **Justice Ssemogerere concludes Kisoro High Court Session, engages stakeholders on justice delivery**

The Resident Judge of Kabale High Court Circuit, Justice Karoli Lwanga Ssemogerere, has concluded a High Court session in Kisoro District in which 13 civil cases, four criminal cases, and one bail application were handled.

Justice Ssemogerere thanked the Chief Magistrate of Kisoro, HW Komakech Kenneth, for coordinating the sessions, the State Attorney, Mr. Christopher Ainomugisha, for diligent prosecution, Defence Counsel on State Brief, Mr. Rodgers Nabasa, and court assessors for their professionalism and teamwork.

He observed that Kisoro provides a more conducive environment for court users compared to Kabale, noting that litigants appear more at ease and are able to participate freely in proceedings.

### **Engagements with Justice Sector Stakeholders**

As part of his outreach, Justice Ssemogerere visited Kisoro Central Police Station where he commended the Uganda Police Force for providing security during the session. He urged officers to remain vigilant in detecting and preventing crime and advised them to work closely with Ministry of Lands Zonal Offices when handling land disputes, given Kisoro's growing population and rising land values.

Earlier in the week, Justice Ssemogerere also visited Kisoro Government Prison.

The Officer in Charge, Mr. Joseph Odeke, reported that the facility houses 254 inmates; 68 convicts and 186 remands, and is grappling with congestion. He noted that construction of new accommodation blocks will soon begin to ease the strain.

Inmates raised concerns over prolonged remand periods, repeated denial of bail, adjournments due to absent prosecution witnesses, delays in juvenile age determination, and alleged misconduct by some State Attorneys and Police officers. They also appealed for the reopening of plea bargain sessions to resolve cases more quickly.



Justice Ssemogerere assured inmates of their constitutional right to a fair trial, presumption of innocence, and the right to apply for bail. He acknowledged the high number of remand prisoners compared to convicts and explained that his team prioritizes older cases to ensure fairness. He pledged to work with the Prisons Service to prevent unnecessary transfers of low-risk convicts far from their home areas and encouraged inmates to embrace rehabilitation.

He further revealed that he had requested female advocates to take interest in the plight of women prisoners and extend legal support.

### **Commitment to Justice**

Justice Ssemogerere reaffirmed the Judiciary's commitment to collaborating with justice institutions to enhance access to justice, reduce case backlog, and promote rehabilitation and reintegration. "Our aim is not only to ensure timely justice but also to restore dignity and hope among those in conflict with the law," he said.